

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-07 TRSE-00  
SSC-01 CU-02 /097 W  
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P R 170713Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8610  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS  
AMEMBASSY LOME  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ACCRA 4603

LONDON FOR SEITZ

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, GH  
SUBJ: ACHEAMPONG STRUGGLING TO RETAIN POWER

REF: (A) ACCRA 4524 (B) ACCRA 4595

1. SUMMARY: ACHEAMPONG'S DRASTIC RESHUFFLING OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GHANA REFLECTS HIS AWARENESS OF THE GOG'S INCREASING UNPOPULARITY AND IS A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO RETAIN POWER. DEMONSTRATIONS AND GENERAL UNREST ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE, HOWEVER, AND WE DO NOT BELIEVE HE CAN REMAIN IN POWER MUCH LONGER WITHOUT RESORTING TO REPRESSIVE MEASURES. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTELS REPORTED SWEEPING JUNE 14 RESHUFFLE OF  
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GHANAIAAN GOVERNMENT BY HEAD OF STATE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL (SMC) ACHEAMPONG AND THE IMMEDIATE AND LARGELY NEGATIVE REACTIONS TO THAT ACTION ON THE PART OF STUDENTS, DOCTORS AND OTHERS. ALTHOUGH THE DUST HAS NOT YET SETTLED AND IT IS STILL FAR TOO SOON TO MAKE ANY DEFINITIVE JUDGMENT, WE CAN OFFER SOME PRELIMINARY AND HIGHLY TENTATIVE

COMMENTS ON THE REASONS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT SOME WAGS ARE ALREADY CALLING "THE TUESDAY NIGHT MASSACRE."

3. FIRST OF ALL, ACHEAMPONG'S DRASTIC SHAKEUP OF THE GOG REFLECTS HIS SOMEWHAT BELATED APPRECIATION OF THE FACT THAT HE AND HIS INCREASINGLY UNPOPULAR GOVERNMENT ARE IN DEEP TROUBLE. ALMOST CERTAINLY, IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO BUY TIME AND, BY SINGLING OUT SOME SCAPEGOATS FOR SACKING, TO SATISFY THE GHANAIA PUBLIC'S DEMANDS FOR DRAMATIC ACTION TO CORRECT GHANA'S ILLS. ACHEAMPONG SIMULTANEOUSLY SELECTED HIS TARGETS FOR THE AXE WITH A VIEW TOWARD SOLIDIFYING HIS OWN POSITION AND ELIMINATING POTENTIAL RIVALS--A TECHNIQUE HE HAS USED WITH GREAT EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PAST. HENCE, THE REMOVAL OF THREE OF THE MOST ABLE AND POPULAR SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS: RADM DZANG, MAJ GEN HAMIDU AND BRIG NUNOO MENSAH.

4. DZANG AND HAMIDU, BOTH NORTHERNERS, ARE PROBABLY SUSPECTED BY ACHEAMPONG OF HAVING BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH RECENTLY-ARRESTED COL. MINYILA AND/OR OTHER NORTHERN COUP PLOTS. CHIEF OF STAFF BRIG NUNOO MENSAH IS NOT A NORTHERNER, BUT IS REPORTEDLY ACCUSED OF OPENLY CRITICIZING THE SMC GOVERNMENT. ALL THREE OFFICERS ARE EFFECTIVE AND POPULAR IN THE ARMED FORCES. THEIR REMOVAL IS LIKELY TO CAUSE FURTHER RESENTMENT IN OFFICER CORPS. PREVIOUSLY ACHEAMPONG  
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HAS BEEN ABLE TO ISOLATE HIGH RANKING OFFICERS WITH CHARGES OF CORRUPTION OR INSUBORDINATION (E.G., OKAI, BEAUSOLIEL) BEFORE REMOVING THEM, BUT HE HAS NOT DONE SO IN THIS CASE.

5. THE REMOVAL OF LT COL KUTIN (COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS), LT COL JACKSON (LOCAL GOVERNMENT) AND COL NKEGBE (HEALTH) AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY CIVILIANS NOT ONLY ELIMINATED THREE NOTORIOUSLY CORRUPT AND INEFFICIENT COMMISSIONERS BUT PERMITTED THE INFUSION OF MORE CIVILIANS--A WELCOME ACTION LONG OVERDUE IN THE EYES OF MOST GHANAIA. THE REMOVAL OF THE RESPECTED CHIEF JUSTICE AZU CRABBE IS PROBABLY RELATED TO HIS INABILITY (ALONG WITH THE ASANTEHENE) TO GET THE STUDENTS OFF ACHEAMPONG'S BACK IN THEIR RECENT AND ILL FATED MEDIATION ATTEMPT AND, MORE SERIOUS IP ACHEAMPONG'S EYES, HIS MENTION IN A RECENT STUDENT MANIFESTO AS A CANDIDATE TO HEAD AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AFTER ACHEAMPONG WAS REMOVED.

6. PARTICULARLY DISTURBING IS THE REMOVAL OF THE VERY ABLE AMON NIKOI AS GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF GHANA. IN HIS EFFORTS TO CONTROL FOREIGN EXCHANGE EXPENDITURES AND SET MORE SENSIBLE ECONOMIC PRIORITIES, NIKOI HAS HAD SEVERAL RECENT CONFRONTATIONS WITH ACHEAMPONG. WE ASSUME THAT THE CHAIRMAN HAS GROWN WEARY OF THESE ARGUMENTS WITH NIKOI AND DESIRES A MORE PLIANT HAND AT THE BANK. GHANA THUS LOSES ONE OF ITS BRIGHTEST AND MOST DEDICATED CIVIL SERVANTS. (NIKOI WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY WHEN THE AXE FELL.)

7. JOE APPIAH'S ASSIGNMENT TO THE UN PROBABLY REFLECTS (A) APPIAH'S FAILURE IN HIS ASSIGNED TASK TO DRUM UP WIDESPREAD PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR UNION GOVERNMENT: AND (B) THE FACT THAT THE MILITARY HAS NEVER LIKED NOR TRUSTED APPIAH AND RESENTED HIS STATUS AS CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDANT TO ACHEAMPONG. THE CHAIRMAN ALSO RECOGNIZED THAT APPIAH FANCIED HIMSELF AS A FUTURE PRIME MINISTER AND THUS WAS ALSO A POTENTIAL RIVAL. IN NEW YORK, ALTHOUGH GHANA'S IMAGE AT THE UN MAY SUFFER, APPIAH WILL BE SAFELY REMOVED FROM THE DOMESTIC SCENE.

8. APPOINTMENTS OF THE RESPECTED ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE COAST AMISSAH AND TRADE UNION CONGRESS (TUC) SEC GEN ISSIFU (LATTER IS STILL IN GENEVA AT ILO CONFERENCE) WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY MADE--AS WERE THE OTHERS-- UNILATERALLY BY ACHEAMPONG WITHOUT CONSULTATIONS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ACCRA 4603

MF ANY KIND WITH THE TWO MEN. TUC OFFICIALS WERE STUNNED AT THE NEWS, AND GHANIAN CONTACTS ARE ALREADY GRUMBLING ABOUT THE TWO MEN'S BEING "USED" BY THE HEAD OF STATE IN THIS WAY. BOTH MEN ARE RESPECTED HERE AS INDEPENDENT AND TOUGH-MINDED (AMISSAH CLASHED WITH NKRUMAH ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION), AND IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THEY WILL REALLY COOPERATE IN ACHEAMPONG'S ATTEMPT TO BURNISH HIS DOMESTIC IMAGE. AT THE MOMENT, WE ARE INCLINED TO DOUBT IT.

9. STRANGELY ENOUGH, IN THE LIGHT OF THE HIGHER-LEVEL SHIFTS INVOLVED, PERHAPS THE MOST DANGEROUS--NOT TO SAY STUPID--ACTION BY ACHEAMPONG WAS HIS FIRING OF DR. DODU, THE HEAD OF GHANA'S MEDICAL SCHOOL, AND DR. BADDOE, A SURGEON AT KORLE BU TEACHING HOSPITAL. THIS PETULANT ACT, REFLECTING THE CHAIRMAN'S ANGER AT THE RECENT (AND CONTINUING) STRIKE OF THE DOCTORS, CONFIDENTIAL

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HAS GIVEN THE STUDENTS A NEW CAUSE AROUND WHICH THEY ARE RALLYING AND IS DEEPLY RESENTED BY MANY OF OUR GHANAIAI CONTACTS.

10. IT APPEARS EVIDENT THAT THE SUBSTANTIAL INFUSION OF CIVILIAN BLOOD INTO A PREVIOUSLY ALMOST ENTIRELY MILITARY CABINET WAS INTENDED BY ACHEAMPONG TO APPEASE PUBLIC IMPATIENCE WITH MILITARY LEADERSHIP AND POSSIBLY EVEN TO GIVE A FORETASTE OF WHAT HE MEANS BY UNION GOVERNMENT. FIRST EDITORIAL REACTION IN GHANIAN TIMES, WHOSE EDITOR KWAME GYAWU-KYEM IS KNOWN TO BE VERY CLOSE PERSONALLY TO ACHEAMPONG, CONCENTRATED WHOLLY ON THIS ASPECT. PAPER OBSERVED THAT THE MOVE BRINGS REPRESENTATIVES OF LABOR AND CHURCH AS WELL AS DISTINGUISHED ECONOMISTS AND A TRADITIONAL CHIEF INTO TOP LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND GIVES THEM A CHANCE "TO PROVE THEIR METTLE."

11. THE QUESTION REMAINS: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?  
THESE CHANGES AND NEW APPOINTMENTS ARE LARGELY  
COSMETIC AND DO NOT BEGIN TO ATTACK GHANA'S  
FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS. (INDEED, THE REMOVAL OF AN  
INTERNATIONALLY-KNOWN FIGURE SUCH AS DR. NIKOI FROM  
THE BANK WILL DELAY FURTHER ANY HOPE OF ECONOMIC  
REFORMS AND RECOVERY.) WHILE MANY WILL REGARD THE  
APPOINTMENT OF MORE CIVILIAN COMMISSIONERS AS A STEP  
IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, THE LEVEL OF DISAFFECTION  
IS NOW SUCH--PARTICULARLY AMONG THE STUDENTS--THAT  
ONLY THE REMOVAL OF ACHEAMPONG HIMSELF IS LIKELY TO TURN OFF  
THE RISING TIDE OF DISCONTENT. ACHEAMPONG'S SUDDEN RESHUFFLE  
REFLECTED HIS GROWING DESPERATION AND A LAST DITCH ATTEMPT TO  
RETAIN POWER. IT MAY HAVE BOUGHT HIM SOME TIME--BUT  
NOT, WE THINK, VERY MUCH. THE STUDENTS ARE SPOILING  
FOR A CONFRONTATION AND ARE DETERMINED TO TOPPLE  
ACHEAMPONG. WE THEREFORE CONTINUE TO FIND IT  
DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THE CHAIRMAN CAN CONTINUE  
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MUCH LONGER IN OFFICE UNLESS HE RESORTS TO  
REPRESSIVE AND DESPOTIC METHODS. SMITH

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## Message Attributes

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